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BOOK REVIEWS

Life and Remains of the Rev. R. H. Quick. Edited by F. Storr.
New York: The Macmillan Company. 1899.

THESE memoirs, consisting chiefly of an autobiography, selected, as the editor states, out of forty notebooks, cannot fail to possess exceptional interest for the teaching profession on both sides of the Atlantic. Nor will this be diminished by the fact that, so far as English *primary* schools are concerned, most of the more serious defects which Mr. Quick denounces or ridicules have now disappeared, *e. g.*, the undue exaltation of the three r's, payment by individual results, monotonous and unintelligent reading, and mechanical instruction generally. Indeed, the history of a pioneer in the path of progress must always be a fascinating one and full of useful lessons for the future.

With regard, however, to elementary education Mr. Quick is hardly fair in his strictures upon such well-known authorities as Mr. Sharpe and Sir J. Fitch, formerly chief inspectors of schools, and either minimizes or ignores the great reforms they inaugurated not only in "the mechanical working of the code" but in the whole system of which it is the embodiment. It is also a matter of common knowledge that these improvements received the hearty support of their colleagues. Moreover, his criticisms of the code itself (that of 1880), though in some respects thoroughly deserved, are too sweeping to command the assent of even its most stalwart opponents. Thus: "I suppose the code is so bad, because it represents collective folly, which is much more capable of expression than collective wisdom;" or, "one would think, to hear these teachers and managers, that the code with its six standards was the work, not of the Privy Council, but of the Almighty, and that the capacities of children had been formed with constant reference to it."

His generalizations, too, are of much the same character and appear to be based on imperfect data. He asserts, for example, with little or no reservation, that "it will be found that out of the five hours a day or twenty-five hours a week spent in school, hardly an hour is given to mental training;" and again, as regards the teaching of history and

geography, that "though he (the boy) may be proud of his learning, he has no interest in any character or event in history, or in any place beyond his dwelling-place, and his so-called knowledge is merely verbal knowledge, which will soon vanish and leave no trace behind." The same remark, though in a less degree, applies to what he says respecting religious teaching in elementary schools. No doubt it is often dull, formal, and perfunctory, but this is by no means the general rule, and it is much to be doubted if Mr. Quick's own pupils would have been able to solve the riddle he propounded to the lads of a country Sunday-school, viz., whether "our Lord was alive before he was born at Bethlehem." He is on firmer ground in his estimate of the English *commercial* view of education, *i. e.*, the obtaining a precise "quid pro quo" for the money expended by the state. In fact it must be admitted that the average "man in the street," including the "superior person," is not enamored of the "new learning" and in his heart of hearts does not believe in it, even after more than a quarter of a century of national education. The intellectual table is loaded with a feast of good things and "the three r's" are no longer the "pièce de résistance," but the requisite appetite has not yet been created—a remarkable contrast to the prevailing sentiment in the United States, where the public school has become almost an object of worship.

Taken as a whole, however, Mr. Quick's view of English national education is so pessimistic that an outsider might imagine that its condition at the present day is no better than it was in 1870. Thus writing in 1889 he tells us that "in the schoolroom, especially, every old practice, however obviously absurd, is maintained till it is thrust out by a clamour for something else," and that "the officials see things from a bad standing-point for understanding them, and the head inspectors cannot see the wood for the trees." Such statements, except, perhaps, to a limited extent, are not justified by the facts; and Carlyle's "thinking man," the enemy of the "Princes of Darkness," is to be found quite as much among common folk, such as teachers, inspectors, permanent officials, and parliamentary "bosses" as in the ranks of philosophers and theorists.

On the other hand it is interesting to note how much there is in common between Mr. Quick and Colonel Parker of Quincy and Chicago fame, this being particularly noticeable in the latter's *Talks on Pedagogics*. Thus Quick makes the scholar's "interest" the one thing needful and denies that knowledge is an end in itself. "Unless interest

is aroused," he says, "the mind (of the young at least) does not and cannot work."

"G. D. (Grant Duff) measures everything by the knowledge acquired. I would measure everything by the activity and strength of intellect produced." "When the mind is aroused and is on the lookout to observe and compare and store up, it acquires rapidly things that no amount of teaching can knock in." "When 'omne scibile' was supposed to be contained in the writings of Aristotle and of Thomas Aquinas, there seemed some sense in speaking of learning as a finite act. But now the 'scibile' stretches in all directions to infinity."

"The human educator, so far as he comes up to the true idea, is like the divine Educator." "One would certainly suppose that the mind, like the body, would be developed by exercise, and further that it would find pleasure in the exercise best suited for it; but we start with the assumption that boys will not like their work, and therefore we put them through it like a drill."

We now come to Mr. Quick's discussion of secondary education in general and of "public schools" in particular, a system of which a French cynic has said, "*c'est le meilleur du monde et c'est exécration*." And here both his dicta and criticisms are extremely instructive and valuable, his wide theoretical knowledge having been supplemented by many years of practical experience, not only at middle-class schools such as Hurstpierpoint and Cranleigh, but also at Harrow. It is evident, however, that his mind was colored (not to say warped) throughout by his own early training, which, as his biographer states, "had left him profoundly dissatisfied with existing methods," so that he "felt assured that even if he failed he could not well do worse than his own masters had done for him." He was also of a very sensitive nature, and seems not to have been of strong physique. Hence he felt more keenly than most boys the so-called "knocking into shape" of his early days. "How well I remember," he says, "what I suffered in this way nearly thirty years ago!" *i. e.*, on the subject of home and the instruction received there. "My own school life taught me that a boy is happy or miserable according as he is liked or disliked by his companions." Again one of his colleagues at Harrow remarks: "Of all that savoured or seemed to savour of *ψβρις*, or brutality, or injustice, he was absolutely intolerant, and the indignation which would flash out at anything of the kind gained him the nickname of 'Old Fireworks'—a most appropriate title."

Mr. Quick's advice as to punishments, though not altogether coinciding with modern ideas, is nevertheless sound common sense. Here are two examples: (1) "The right plan is to annex certain penalties to those trifling offences which will become inconveniently frequent if not noticed, and then to exact these penalties with a mechanical and so feelingless precision." (2) "The master must take care that in his anxiety to prevent the recurrence of the offence he does not threaten more than he will be able to carry out." Nor does he believe that punishments can be avoided. "The reformers say, 'cease to make the work unpleasant and you may give up punishing;' but this is a *non sequitur*. If a boy is to do his work because he feels pleasure in doing it, he must find more 'pleasure than he would find in anything else. And here the case of the enemies of punishment breaks down entirely, for it is only Lady Jane Greys who prefer Plato to hunting, and even if I could get my boys to like reading Molière, I couldn't possibly get most of them to like it better than skating or watching a cricket match."

On the vexed question of the comparative advantages of day and boarding schools, Quick decides in favor of the latter, but considers that the system of masters' houses (as at Harrow, Eton, etc.) is far preferable to that of boarding houses, *i. e.*, where "the boys live in the school buildings and are maintained out of the common funds of the school." This arrangement (known as the hostel) obtains largely in some of the more modern public schools and the new county schools, and in certain respects resembles the "vie de caserne" of the French "internats," though most of the objectionable features of these lycées, such as the constant espionage of the usher, are not to be found in their English counterparts.

As regards defects in teaching even in the best public schools, where good salaries are paid and the masters are "the very pick of the universities," Mr. Quick considers that the instruction is too didactic and that "whatever may be the cause, our men here (*i. e.*, at Harrow) do not take much interest in the theory of their profession." This he attributes first and foremost to their being overworked. "If a man has a form of thirty-five boys, a pupil-room of thirty-five *other* boys, and the management of a boarding house besides, it is quite impossible that he can have leisure to think what he is doing." "Another great mischief is that men are distracted by having a lot of pupils in different parts of the school. Another is that every man teaches as he likes without troubling himself about the methods of the man below him or above him."

The next important matter with which Mr. Quick deals is the systematized cramming for entrance scholarships, for which boys begin their training at twelve, and even ten, years of age. This, as every student of English education is aware, has created a host of establishments for the express purpose of securing these prizes, large fees being charged by experts in the art. "I firmly believe," he observes, "that these competitions do harm. In the first place, they lead to unhealthy forcing of clever boys, and secondly they limit the instruction given in preparatory schools. Again, as Montaigne says, we must remember that boys have both bodies and minds, and that we cannot separate them. But this is just what our present system tries to do. You headmasters, who are always fishing for clever boys, poison the water to bring the fish to the top."

He also shows the evils of cramming in connection with examinations generally, and lays his finger on what is the vitiating principle of English education, not only in public schools, but also in universities, viz., the divorce of instruction from examination and the arrangement of the examinees in order of merit, which necessitates the setting of questions that "admit of the most definite answers." "Directly you make the examiner one man and the instructor another, the instructor has to prepare his pupils to impress the examiner, and their answers may be no real index of their knowledge or their intelligence." In common, however, with many other thinkers, who deplore the pernicious results of these competitive examinations, he is unable to prescribe a satisfactory remedy. All that he suggests is "taking as examination subjects only such things as cannot be crammed: mathematics, unprepared translation, composition, and the like."

At present the training of teachers in England is confined to those in elementary schools, a "public school" (such as Eton, Harrow, etc.) having been caustically defined as one "where they don't know how to teach." At all events the instruction in the latter, including grammar schools, is for the most part entirely empirical, at least so far as the junior teachers are concerned. Hence Mr. Quick, like other educational reformers, insists upon the need of the training of teachers in secondary as well as primary schools. It is true, as he says, that "in *every* profession a man's excellence depends on the unexaminable part of him, not on the examinable;" but on the other hand, even the staunchest anti-theorists must allow that "examinations secure to some extent, at least, that the teacher has thought about what he is doing and why he is doing it; and, further, that he knows the

best that has been thought and done by other people." About 1882 certain "esprits remuants" at Cambridge succeeded in establishing a course of lectures on "the History, Theory, and Practice of Education." At first these were well attended, though chiefly by women, but the audience gradually dwindled to ten, and Mr. Quick regretfully admits that, "of course, the whole thing has been pronounced a failure." His ideas, too, were scouted by Dr. Ridding, the then head master of Winchester, though Mr. Quick effectively disposes of his arguments by pointing out that they were directed against foes of straw. "Ridding has great aptitude for the construction of guys, and when he has provided himself with these adversaries he shows them no mercy. Here are some specimens of them: '*The* theory of education is to be the panacea for the schoolmaster's failures.' Here is another: 'Examination in a theory of education is a training for teachers superior or equal to practical acquaintance.'" Such statements, of course, do not affect the question at issue, and no one would dream of accepting them. Indeed, even the most pronounced advocate of the training of teachers would never maintain that there is any such "royal road" to pedagogical success. In Mr. Quick's words what we require is: (1) "Men of insight to examine into the true theory of education; (2) men who will make it their business to find out what course education is taking on the continent and in the United States; (3) men to show us how best to do what we are now trying to do." In fact a knowledge of pedagogy is as essential to the teacher as of mathematics to the engineer.

Mr. Quick does not seem to regard psychology as of any practical value in teaching, and cannot, therefore, be considered "up to date" in this respect. At the same time it must be conceded that with our present limited data we can only understand children *empirically* and that a science of education cannot yet be constructed.

One of the pleasantest parts of these memoirs is devoted to a diary of the early life of the author's two children, Dora and Oliver; and, though, as his biographer remarks, "Quick had no knowledge of physiology or of psychology in its modern developments," yet the chronicle has evidently been kept with great care and observation, and as such must commend itself to every lover of "child-study." The chapters on Language and Memory are also of considerable interest, especially the section dealing with "mastery" as against "impressionist" methods in the teaching of the former, the conclusion being that, judged by results, it is a case of "six of one and half a dozen of

the other." The "Varia" with which the memoirs conclude are none the less entertaining because of their heterogeneousness, and show the same keenness of perception as in educational matters. Americans, too, will appreciate the following estimate of the present commissioner of education : "Mr. Harris I take to be one of the best specimens of our American cousins I have met with. It is astonishing to find a man with energy that suffices for so many pursuits. He is great in Hegelian philosophy, which affects all his thoughts, and he is editor of a journal of philosophy. Then comes his wonderful activity in the school-world. He is now going to make a study of the educational system of England." In brief, these records exhibit to us a man of broad sympathies and independent thought, without pedantry or conventionalism, and, above all, an earnest seeker after truth, "the wooing and possession of which form the sovereign good of human nature."

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Introduction to the Study of History. By CH. V. LANGLOIS AND CH. SEIGNOBOS. Translated by G. G. BERRY. With a Preface by F. YORK POWELL. New York, 1898, 350 pp.

THIS is a book of great importance to all students and teachers of history. Its value, however, consists not in any discussion of the teaching of history, for this is but briefly touched upon; nor yet in any additions to the methodology of history, for it contains little that is new to anyone who knows his Bernheim; but in the fact that it summarizes, in terse and telling phrase, the existing theory and practice of historical investigation and composition. For this reason even master workmen of the guild of historians may find it useful, while for apprentices it is indispensable. Moreover, nothing would so quickly or surely raise the status of history in secondary schools as a thorough familiarity on the part of the teachers with the principles of historical criticism and interpretation. The need of the hour in high schools is not for more pedagogy, but more scholarship, of the sort that will vitalize the dry skeleton of the subject. This book, therefore, must take its place among the few which every progressive teacher will read, reread, and annotate. In Bacon's phrase, this is one of the books to be chewed and digested.